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T. B. M. Mason.

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Cassie G. Myers

From Lu. Pianna Mason.

March 1853.

(Mackam

THE CLOUD

WITH

THE SILVER LINING.

THE CLOUD

WITH

THE SILVER LINING;

BY THE AUTHOR

OF

"A TRAP-TO CATCH A SUNBEAM," "ONLY," "OLD JOLLIFFE," AND

"SEQUEL," "THE DREAM CHINTZ," "THE HOUSE ON THE ROCK,"

&c. &c.

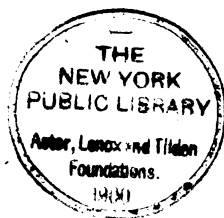
*MacKarness (Mrs. Maticson
Anne Pleasant)*

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JAMES MUNROE AND COMPANY.

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THE CLOUD.

“WELL, Auntie, and what then? Go on, I love to hear your stories of yourself, and when I have listened to all your suffering, and look in your face, your calm face, I can scarcely believe it all, and think it must be a story you have made out of your own head.”

“Auntie” smiled a cold quiet smile, and answered in a voice so low, that the rustling of the autumn blast outside the house rendered what she said almost inaudible.

“It is all true, Annie, quite true.—I have little more to add now; my last grief was your uncle’s death and my removal from my long-loved home to this cottage.”

“It is a pretty place, Auntie.”

"Yes, Annie, I am quite contented. is that Frank?"

"No, that's not his step," answered the girl with emphasis.

"It is getting near his time, though. Betsy to see about his supper if you please, dear."

"Yes, Auntie,"—and Annie rose from seat and left the room to fulfil her Aunt's request.

Irrespective of the wide difference in the of the speakers, the contrast between them very great—Annie Lindsay was a blue-eyed fair-haired girl, with a round, plump figure, homely happy face, and a rosebud of a mouth about which sparkled the sauciest little dimple every time she smiled—and that was not always—for Annie had no sorrows of her own; therefore, unless when listening to the woes of others, the dimples kept their place about her pretty mouth; but she was full of sympathy, when she did hear a sad story the dimples vanished, and large pearly drops shone in her blue eyes.

The simplest misfortune was by her exaggerated into great sorrow, for she had never known or witnessed grief, and as she listened to the stories told by her Aunt, her little simple heart was filled with wonder that she was living to relate them,—and others, older and more experienced, wondered too,—not so much that she was living, but at the calm meek face with but few wrinkles for her age, and the low tranquil voice, and the clear pale blue eye which nothing could fill with tears. Was it that in a life of such sorrow they had wept the fountain dry? It might be so,—she had neither friends nor relations left who could testify to what she had been. She was of marble paleness, tall and thin; the perfect regularity of her features telling of past beauty. Over her high white forehead the silver hair was braided, and the almost Quaker-like simplicity of her dress, completed the striking difference between herself and her bright and joyous companion; for Annie, it must be confessed, was something of a coquette, and was glad when an occasion offered itself for a spice of cherry-

colored ribbon, which was always disposed with great taste, for that same quality, so indispensable, in a woman especially, Annie fully possessed.

Mrs. Lindsay had, as I have said, outlived all her relatives, at least those of her own age; she had no one now belonging to her but her niece Annie, and one only child, a son. Annie's father was a tradesman in the great city of London,—mother she had none; the mother had given her life for the child, and Mr. Lindsay, a stern man of business, without an interest beyond the rise and fall of the funds or a treasure so great as his money, gazed at the helpless wailing infant, and wondered what was to become of it; and what would have become of it, is hard to say, but for a woman, who having made a young imprudent marriage with an Irish sergeant who had deserted her, was glad to be hired as a nurse, and who, with the greatest devotion and zeal, became a second mother to the little orphan, and when it grew older, and its joyous laughter and merry romps, were voted a nuisance by its father, she *sought* out this widowed Aunt, and by her prayers

and entreaties tried to win her to consent that Annie should come and live with her. Her eloquence prevailed, and Mrs. Lindsay made an arrangement with her brother-in-law to take the little Annie and her nurse, whose husband having left her, and death robbed her of her child, had no tie in the world save the love she felt for Annie. Seventeen years had passed since then, and Mr. Lindsay had almost forgotten that he had a daughter, and Annie that she had a father. And an uninterrupted course of peaceful secluded happiness had been hers beneath the roof of her Aunt's pretty home, they paid no visits, made few acquaintances, for the reverses of fortune Mrs. Lindsay had experienced rendered her averse to gaiety, and made her prefer the quiet and privacy of her own little cottage.

It stood on the edge of a common near a little village in the south of England. A few white cottages were dotted about, which preserved it from loneliness, and yet did not interfere with its peaceful retirement. Mrs. Lindsay's was the largest and best, the others were occupied chiefly

by laboring men and their families,—and one belonging to the blacksmith had a shed built beside it, from beneath which the forge sent out a cheerful glow of light, pleasant to see in the gloom of these autumn evenings. Almost always, too, a group of idlers stood about it, to gossip on all that concerned themselves and their neighbors. A few sturdy little ponies grazed amongst the furze and heather, and here and there a donkey with his long ears erect stared at the ponies, who turned from him with a toss of the head, as though in contempt of so bad an imitation of themselves. Opposite to the road which led to the village was another between high banks covered with wild flowers, which brought the traveller suddenly on to the wild sea-beach, a long line of coast without a house in sight save a small preventive station; and to ramble on this beach, with her dear “old nurse,” whom she loved as a mother, was one of Annie’s chief delights, her aunt seldom or never going out, save to church.

But all this time we are leaving Annie in the kitchen, not that she is in a hurry to leave it, for

no sooner does her bright face peep in at the door, than Grace makes a rush at her "darling," and has so much to say, that she is usually detained three times as long as is necessary for the fulfilment of her mission. While the supper was being prepared, therefore, Grace drew a chair near the wood fire for Annie, and settled herself for a chat.

"Mr. Frank's later than usual it seems to me, our clock has struck seven some time."

"Well, I was just thinking he was, Grace," said Annie, anxiously rising from her seat and gazing out into the fast waning light. "Make haste with the supper, Betsy, and take the candles into the parlor; he likes it to be ready when he comes in," she continued, turning to Grace.

"True, dear, it tells him how much he's thought of and cared for."

Annie sighed slightly, as she answered, —

"Yes, Auntie loves him very dearly. Poor Auntie! how much she has suffered, Grace! and borne it all so well."

"Ah! Miss Annie, she has found the 'Silver

Lining' to the clouds, that I've so often you of."

"I wish I knew what that means, Grace said Annie, smiling.

"It's a saying in Ireland, dear, and I tell you what it means more than that there trouble so bad, but that it has a bright side. you never see a black cloud in the sky, dar with an edge like silver all round. Perhaps from that the saying comes."

As Grace concluded her sentence, Annie heard some one outside calling in a strange wild voice

"Ma'am, Ma'am."

"That's poor Ruth, Grace, let her in, it cold and windy to-night."

Grace hesitated a moment, and then said lower tone,

"I don't much like that woman, hadn't better give her some money, and send her dear, how the wind howls."

"Ma'am, Ma'am," again the voice called.

"Nonsense, Grace, said Annie, laugh

“why you seem quite nervous to-night; let the poor creature in, think how cold she must be in those few rags which barely cover her.

Grace shook her head ominously, but proceeded to open the kitchen door according to the young lady's orders. Crouched in a corner close to the step was a woman some eighty or ninety years old, with seemingly no covering but a torn and ragged gown — she was very small, almost child-like in size — over her brown and withered face hung straggling locks of thin white hair, a dirty lace cap covered her head, and in her bony hands she held a long staff. When the door was opened she sprung from her recumbent position, and exclaimed, in her wild thin voice,

“Ah! Ma'am, lend Ruth a halfpenny, I'll pay you again next week, — yes, yes, pay you again.”

“Come in, Ruth,” said Annie, kindly, come in near the fire, you must be cold.”

“Yes, but promise to lend it me first.”

“Oh, yes, I promise,” said Annie, smiling, “would you like some supper?”

“Oh, yes; that I would — so hungry — had

a nice dinner yesterday, — nice saveloy — a lady gave me, — don't know who she was — kind — everybody's kind to Ruth. How's sweetheart? bless him!" she continued, turning sharply to Grace, who somewhat ungraciously was offering her the supper. The poor creature seized it, and began eating it eagerly, asking "how her sweetheart was."

"Oh!" said Annie, laughing, "he's well, we expect him in every moment, you'll see him before you go."

"Ah! he's nice, so handsome. Ruth's sweethearts always were. Is he going to be married? Are you going to have him? I won't be jealous of you. I'll love you because he does."

A blush of the brightest crimson mantled Annie's neck and face, she turned away to the window, and after a pause, wishing the maniac good bye, and desiring Grace to give her sixpence, she returned to the parlor.

Her Aunt was standing at the window watching for her son. The wind blew roughly over the sea, common in heavy gusts; the clouds scudded

rapidly over the sky, as though bent on some distant mission they must fulfil ere nightfall.

The gossips round the forge fire were fast dispersing, parties of ducks and processions of geese were waddling home, tumbling over now and then with the violence of the wind — far behind them a little boy in a smock frock, who had been sent to drive them in, loitered to chat with another boy or to throw stones at the donkeys; and trotting on some fat poney, with a large basket on her arm, came by a woman from market, her head bent against the strong wind, and her large red cloak inflated like a balloon behind her. Soon all these had passed, and no signs of life remained upon the common, but the ponies and donkeys standing with their tails to the wind, and the light of fires gleaming out of the cottage windows. The moon was rising, but across her bright face dark angry clouds were passing, and at length one heavier than the other obscured it altogether, save that the rays turned its edges to silver.

Annie had crept to her Aunt's side and watch-

ing with her, but neither of them spoke, and the son came not. At length Mrs. Lindsay said,

“ Frank is very late.”

“ Yes, what can make him so, Auntie ?”

“ It is Saturday night, and the men have to be paid.”

Annie thought there had been many Saturday nights, but yet Frank had been home much earlier. It grew darker and darker — they were both so anxious that they could not talk — the fire, for the evenings were cold enough to make a small fire pleasant, threw a glare over the room — it was too low to have a flame, — making the shadow of the furniture take fantastic shapes. Annie shivered, and moving from the window stirred the fire and put on a fresh log. It blazed up cheerily then.

“ Frank can see that all across the common, I should think, Auntie !”

“ I hope so, love.”

Annie sat down beside the fire — but she did not gaze at it as she was wont to do, imagining fairies and caverns and quaint figures of men and

animals amongst the coals. No, her gaze was rivetted on the heavy clouds, which still hung bodingly in the sky, and it seemed to her that now she was to know the meaning of Grace's proverb, — that a cloud was to rest upon her hitherto bright life, — that the trouble was coming.

Motionless and silent Mrs. Lindsay kept her watch at the window to catch the first glimpse of the truant, and strangely the words kept ringing in her ears, as though she heard them spoken, "he was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow." Everything was so still out of doors and so silent, that a sudden wild laugh from Ruth startled them both.

"It's only Ruth, Auntie, she's been having some supper."

"Oh! poor Ruth, she has not been here for a long while," and Mrs. Lindsay sighed, and turning away from the window sat down by Annie.

Hark! a firm quick step, a manly voice speaking at the back door. Thank Heaven her son at last — none but that Heaven knew the anxiety

she had felt for his absence ; a slight, very slight tinge of color underneath the eye had been its only outward sign, and all she showed of gladness was a little convulsive pressure of the fingers, and a calm happy smile as she said,

“ Here he is.”

Not so Annie ; pale as death she had watched from that window, with a choking sensation in her throat which was only prevented from being a burst of tears by fear of alarming her Aunt, but now with a joyous cry she flew out of her seat and into the kitchen to welcome him, helping him off with his coat, running for his slippers, and bringing the bootjack instead, running back again, talking and laughing all the time, forgetting the hour of anxiety — forgetting the cloud in the sky — mindful of but one bright happy fact, that he was at home well and unhurt. Annie had given him no time to speak, but when he could get in a word he said,

“ Has my Mother been very anxious ? ”

“ Yes, I think she has, but she did not say so.”

“ No, she would be sure not to say so,” he

answered, as he walked into the parlor. "Well, Mother, he continued, going up to her and kissing her tenderly, as he always did.

"My boy — I am glad you are come, are you well?"

A Mother's eye noticed at one glance a change in her child's face, — a weary haggard look unusual in his open cheerful countenance.

"Tired, Mother, that's all — I shall be glad of something to eat, or to drink rather, I am very thirsty." In a moment a foaming glass of beer stood beside him.

"Thank you, Annie, dear," he said, and he laid his hand on hers; it was very hot and feverish.

"I don't think you are very well, Master Frank," she said, laughing. Yes, laughing, because to her it seemed something too absurd to be anxious or fidgety about anything, now he was at home. What more could they want. Though he had said he wanted something, he made but a poor attempt to eat the supper prepared for him, and then throwing himself back in his chair, was silent for some time; however, that little Annie talked

enough for two. She drew a low chair close to him, and looking up in his face with her sunny eyes, chattered away to him as fast as she could, till at length he stroked back her fair soft hair, and kissing her forehead, said kindly :

“How the child talks to-night; but rude as it seems, I must to bed, for I am tired to death.”

“It’s not nine o’clock, Frank,” said his Mother.

“I know, Mother, but if I’m tired, what does it signify if it is eight o’clock?”

Something must be wrong — for the first time in his life he has spoken impetuously to his Mother — his idolized mother — that being, whom he loved with a reverential love, that made him think that all she did and said, and thought, was right. He lighted a candle and kissing her and his little cousin, whom he always fondled and treated as though she were the little child he first remembered her, went off to his room. In a few minutes Annie and Mrs. Lindsay followed his example — and the former, her heart lighter and happier for the slight shock which had fallen on it, was soon slumbering calmly, smiling in her

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sleep and dreaming foolishly happy dreams, too happy to be realized on earth.

Night closed over the common, one by one the lights vanished from the cottage windows, and "sleep and silence keep their watch o'er men." Grace has been to look at and kiss and bless her darling, as she had done for seventeen years, and the little household are all still and sleeping save one.

Frank has never laid down, never undressed, and now he cautiously opens his door and listens—no sound but the ticking of the old clock; he creeps down stairs, unlocks the door, and putting the key in his pocket, goes out into the night. He pauses for a moment, looks up at his mother's room, and then hurries on.

At the house belonging to the owner of the paper-mills where Frank is employed, there has been a small party, not like a London soirée, but a homely country merry-making, befitting the station of the host and his guests; for though his trade was a successful and lucrative one, James Havendon had no pretension about him, but he

had got something much more attractive in the shape of an interesting only daughter, and had she not been as interesting and good and amiable as she really was, still she would have had admirers, as the only child of a man reputed rich. For her amusement the party had been given, and she had been gliding about amongst her visitors with a gentleness and grace far above her station, but these were innate in Jessie Havendon ; nothing could have made her other than the pure, good, innocent hearted girl she was.

Jessie had had a good mother, — a mother who had shown her the value of goodness here and hereafter, — had taught her that there was a talisman which would keep her good, — one not to be worn externally, but carried in the heart, making every thought and action subservient to it, — an influence teaching her to “hope all things, believe all things, endure all things,” — that would soothe her in sickness, comfort her in sorrow, make her temperate in joy, and Jessie had found this. Religion — the purest and best, was the ruling principle of her life, — and truly had it taught her to

hope, to believe, to endure, — made her peaceful and happy in herself, — loved and respected by others.

The guests had gone, and Jessie having kissed the round fat face of her good humored father, was going to bed, when a servant pale as death rushed into the room and exclaimed in a voice of extreme terror,

“ Oh ! Miss, Master, what do you think ? Poor Mr. Butler, our foreman ! some one’s been and murdered him ! ”

“ Bless my soul,” exclaimed Havendon, jumping up from his easy chair as Jessie seized his hands in horror, “ what’s to be done ? ”

“ Oh ! Sir, really I don’t know — they’ve carried the poor man’s body home. It was just by the cross roads.”

Shocked as she was at this sudden and awful intelligence, Jessie’s quiet self-possession did not desert her ; they could be of no service, and all she could do, therefore, was to calm the terror and excitement of the servants, and induce them to go to bed, assuring them that the proper au-

thorities would take the matter up; and if they sat up all night to talk about it they could do no good, that the wisest course was to carefully secure the house and go to bed. Tremblingly they obeyed their gentle mistress's biddings, and then she turned to her father and said,

“Who can have done this?”

“Who? my girl, — there's a bad enough lot on his way home not to cause much wonder, — when they know his wages have just been paid him, too; poor chap! he wasn't particular who he made his acquaintance.”

“Father, I wish he could have been removed from your service by less horrible means, I should not have been sorry — then.”

“Well! he was rather fond of the bottle, I think; but a clever fellow and a useful man to me, — but you go off to bed now, my child, you look pale as a ghost, and I'll go with one of the men and see into this horrible business — God bless you,” and giving her a hearty kiss and hug, which nearly squeezed the breath out of her body, he sent her to her room.

An hour had passed away, — the Church clock was striking, as Frank Lindsay returned to his home ; as cautiously as he had gone out he entered, closed and barred the door, and stole up stairs. His mother's bedroom door was partially open, a light was burning there as usual, he paused before it and listened — no sound but the same ticking of the old clock, and the deep breathing of his mother. He pushed the door gently and stood gazing at her in her calm sleep ; he, so pale and haggard, his hair damp with the night dew, his eyes bloodshot, stood and gazed at that mild face, that dearly loved mother in her peaceful slumber, and the hot tears seemed to scald his eyelids ; — her lips moved, she was speaking in her sleep.

“ Yes, that's right, Frank, say it again, pray God bless me and make me a good child.”

He could bear no more ; the agony, that had been pent up in his heart for hours, he could endure no longer, — he flew to the bedside, and on his knees clasped the thin white hand lying on

the counterpane, and wept like the little child that she had dreamed he was.

“Mother, dear Mother, teach it me again, that simple prayer, I had forgotten it.”

She woke at this first burst of grief, and started up in terror.

“My child ! my boy ! what is the matter ? I dreamed I heard you crying, — that you were a child and naughty, — and had struck a little play-mate, and I ”—

“And you were teaching me to ask God to bless and make me good : Mother, if I had used those simple words to-night, you would not see me thus.”

“But what is it all about ? Frank ! What has happened ? What have you done ?”

“Nothing, Mother, by God’s mercy, nothing ;” — he was growing calmer now, there was something to him so soothing in his mother’s low-toned voice, and the feel of her soft hand upon his burning head. “I will tell you all about it, and then I shall feel better — perhaps happier. You have

heard me speak of Jessie Havendon, — she is good, Mother, so good, — in short, I love her, — I have never really told her so, but I think she knows it. For months she has been persecuted by a man who is her father's foreman, a drunken fellow, the intimate companion of the worst inhabitants of Sidemoor. I have had words with him incessantly, — he hated me, for he saw that Jessie, dear Jessie, liked me.

“I spoke to Mr. Havendon once about him, and complained of his want of sobriety and violent temper, — but he said, he was a clever man, and he must put up with the rest.

“To-night he was more insolent than ever, — it was through negligence of his I was detained beyond my usual time, and when I spoke to him about it, his cool insolence was irritating beyond description. I came home in a temper that almost terrified myself, — I could not rest, — a thousand thoughts like demons crowded on me, — my love for Jessie, — my poverty, — my hopelessness ever to call her mine, — my rage against Butler. Oh, Mother, you who are so gentle and

so good, cannot understand all I felt during that hour, I determined then to go out — some vague thoughts possessed me never to return, but to go and gaze once more at the house which contained her, and leave this place for ever.”

“Frank!”

“Mother! I was mad, I think,” he continued, pressing and kissing her hands — “but listen, I had just reached the turning of the Sidemoor road, when I saw a man stretched on the ground with a wound in his side from which the life-blood was flowing — it was Butler!”

“Merciful Powers — murdered!”

“Yes, Mother, yes, — the horror that I felt I cannot tell you, — what a lesson for me — if I had met him and he had provoked me further and I — it is too horrid.”

“Frank, Frank, you would not” — said the poor Mother clasping her hands and looking wildly in her son’s face.

“Mother, what will not intemperate anger do? That pallid corpse will haunt me to my grave.”

“But what did you do, Frank, did you give

the alarm? Oh! Heaven," she said as a new thought seemed to occur to her,—"you surely have not left the body there without calling assistance?"

"I have, Mother—I flew home I know not how,—but Mother do not look so wildly," he said, rising and putting his arm around her, "there is no danger, no one saw me I am sure, lights were still shining in Mr. Havendon's house and therefore some of the company must have been still there: on their return home they will find the body of the unhappy man and—"

"And you may be suspected of his murder. Have I lived so long and suffered so much for this?"

It was now for Frank to console where he had sought consolation, and it was long ere he could calm the agitation of his Mother, or assure her, as he tried against his own conviction, that he was free from suspicion. Long and earnest was their conversation, and then she persuaded him to go to his own room and try to get rest that his haggard face might not excite remarks in the morn-

ing, so he left her to seek the rest he so needed ; whilst she lay awake, listening to every sound with a strange and indefinable dread.

As he passed Annie's door, he heard, or thought he heard a low sob, but it might have been fancy, and so he went on to his own room.

The sun rose in unclouded splendor after the rough night, the wind had sunk, and it only now gave a slight sigh occasionally, as though weary of its past exertions. Grace had entered her young mistress's room with a face bright as the sunshine, but the joyous voice with which she was about to speak changed to one of astonishment and grief, for, for the first time since the transient showers of her childhood, Annie was in tears.

“My darling, what is it? What has happened?”

“Oh, Grace! dear Grace! you love me, don't you? Come to me and kiss me,” and she burst into a passion of weeping. Her nurse tried every effort to soothe her, as she wept upon her shoulder like a child, yet forbore to ask the cause of her sorrow until its effects had somewhat subsided;

but then Annie said, "Ask me nothing, dear Grace — ask me nothing, I have been very foolish. I am better now, wiser at least, but the cloud has fallen on me, Grace, and I can see no silver lining. I never shall be happy again, — tell Auntie I've a headache, and leave me alone; draw the curtains close, don't let the gloomy light come into my room;" and throwing her little flushed face back upon the pillow, she closed her eyes, and seemed determined to speak no more.

Mrs. Lindsay who, as I have said, had not slept after her son's communication, but passed the night in the most distressing dread that suspicion might rest on him, rose early and awaited with anxiety his appearance in the parlor; she would not go to his room, for she hoped he was sleeping. He came down at last, and though still pale, he looked very different from the wild haggard being who had disturbed Mrs. Lindsay's slumbers. When they had concluded their almost silent meal, for they could neither of them keep up any lengthened conversation, Mrs. Lindsay said,

“Now will you go with me to Church, Frank?”

“Yes, Mother, I will, but every eye that meets mine will seem to carry accusation in its glance.”

His mother sighed, and faltering some words of consolation, rose from her seat, kissed his forehead, and left him to prepare for Church.

Along the green lanes, across the fields — by the road, came troops of people whom the bells of the Village Church were summoning to prayer; aged men and women, young men and maidens, mothers, fathers and their little ones, all hastening to assemble beneath the roof of the grey old Church, dear to them from many associations of joy and sorrow, of burials, and christenings and marriages; and as they met in the path all paused to speak of the murder, all pitied the wretched victim, but said gently and reverently, for he was dead now, “he was a bad man.”

Mothers said, “Happily he had no children;” Wives, — “It was well he had no wife;” and then they crowded eagerly round one old man, who lived near Sidemoor, for he had news; a

man had been taken up on suspicion, quite a young fellow, but who bore a very bad character, and every circumstance was against him. All drew near to listen, till there was quite a crowd, and the bell had nearly finished, when they were awakened to the fact by a voice requesting them to make way.

It was Frank with his mother on his arm. As he passed through the little crowd, the men touched their caps respectfully to Mrs. Lindsay, and whispered one to the other, — “How mortal bad Mr. Frank do look.” He was pale, deadly pale, for his heart was full, full of penitence and gratitude, and never in his life had he felt such an earnest desire as now, to offer that sacrifice required of all, “a broken and a contrite heart,” or such belief that his offering would be accepted.

In the adjoining hamlet of Sidemoor, no such “assembling together” was taking place; the small Church was never open in the morning, for the clergyman from Allerton did the duty there in the afternoon, when a few women and dirty squalid children, and one or two hulking boys

strolled in, and either fell asleep, or sat whispering together and often laughing. There seemed a blight upon the place, the cottages were few, dirty and out of repair, and inhabited by the worst of each sex. If there ever had been respectable people dwelling there, they must have been driven out by the bad, for they were all gone now. The before-mentioned clergyman said he had done all he could, that they were incorrigible ; when he first came, he had hoped to do good, and he had built a school, but the mothers would not send the children, and now with all the windows broken and covered with mud which had been thrown at it, it stood empty and deserted.

Alas ! that such spots should darken the face of sunny England ; that in these days there should be dwellings in which there is neither Faith, nor Hope, nor Love ; that from childish lips should come forth oaths ; that that sweet age of guileless innocence should be one of infamy and subtlety,—growing up in vice,—growing up to fill our prisons and our convict ships.

It is well that good and zealous men should

with stern self-denial forsake their homes, and in exile, persecution and privation, strive to lighten the darkened mind of the wild Indian, and lead him to the fold of the good Shepherd ; but there are lost sheep here, whom it were better first to strive to bring home. Prisons and penal settlements may teem with felons, and the hangman grow weary of his unceasing labor, but crime will never cease, till the young are brought up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord," till His zealous disciples live amongst the poor in their parishes, checking the first appearance of evil, and teaching them, that order, discipline and decorum, the first forgetfulness of which is the first step to crime.

On this morning several people were standing round one of the wretched cottages, the door of which was partly open, but the entrance was choked up with people. Two surly looking men smoking short pipes, a dirty woman with a pale sickly infant in her arms, and a young ruffianly looking lad with his arm round the neck of a very pretty girl, whose long rough hair hanging down

almost to her waist, he was twirling round his fingers, were the principal personages who stood outside. In the interior crouched on the brick floor sat Ruth Newington, her long staff in her hand, which she was shaking angrily, and uttering a variety of threats against some one, which caused every now and then a burst of laughter from the people who were thus standing round the cottage.

“ Oh ! it’s no use, Goody ! ” said one of the men, taking his pipe from his mouth for a moment, “ they’ve got him now, and he’ll swing for it, depend on it. Where’s the money ? Did he leave you that ? Eh ? ”

“ Give us some of it, old girl, if he did,” said another. “ She don’t know the use of it,” he continued in a lower tone, “ we may just as well have it ; where does she keep it ? ”

“ Here, I’ll go and see,” said the young fellow taking his arm from the girl’s neck, “ I’ll get it if it be there,” and he made a movement forward.

“ No, no, Sam, don’t tease her now,” said

the girl holding him back, "she be so frightened and scared."

She was a woman, — the spark of humanity was not quite extinguished, — moreover she endeavored to induce them all to leave the poor creature, by saying she would stay with her, but she only won them to consent, by promising if Ruth slept, to hunt for the money and bring it to them; so they dispersed, some to the bye-lanes to play at various games, smoke their pipes and quarrel, and others to the wretched dwellings they called homes.

Yes — the grandson of Ruth was the murderer of Richard Butler. The son of Ruth's only daughter, whose misconduct it was said had turned his mother's brain, Sandy Newington, had lived with the poor creature since his mother's death; all the money given her in compassion to her infirmity he took from her, and used her with the greatest coarseness and brutality, but she did not seem to be aware of it, and loved him and talked of him as her "dear good boy." Idle and worthless, the constant inmate of the alehouse, he be-

came known to Butler, whose love of drink and low company brought him to the same place. Sandy had little trouble himself as to who he was, until at length under the influence of drink Butler began to brag of his situation, and the large salary paid him every Saturday—Butler was now a corpse, and the wages of which he boasted, in the pocket of his murderer. Sandy had made no effort to conceal himself, on the contrary, he walked into the alehouse immediately after. Of course he was soon taken, and he laughed at the agony of his bewildered grandmother as the officers bore him away. Fear he had none, he cared not what became of him now, and he had never been taught what would become of him hereafter.

When Frank and his mother returned from Church, they found Annie in the parlor, she rose and kissed her Aunt and held out her hand to Frank, but she did not speak until Mrs. Lindsay asked her how she felt.

“Better, Auntie, but my head still aches.” What an altered voice—a sweet, melancholy sadness in its tone, so unlike her former bright

and joyous one. Mrs. Lindsay looked earnestly at her.

“ Did you sleep well, Annie, dear ? ”

Frank started and went out of the room, saying hurriedly, he should take a walk. Mrs. Lindsay repeated her question.

“ Yes, Auntie, when I got to sleep, very well. Have you had a good sermon ? ”

“ Yes, dear, very ; have you or the servants heard the shocking news ? ”

Annie turned her head and looked out of the window, as she said,

“ About the murder ? Yes ; the milkwoman told Grace, — the man’s taken up.”

“ The man, — the murderer, — is he ? ” asked Mrs. Lindsay eagerly, “ and are they sure he is the right one ? ”

“ Yes, Auntie, they have no other suspicion whatever, — it is Sandy Newington, Ruth’s grandson.”

Annie had spoken this slowly, and with emphasis, — but she never turned her head from the window, though she heard her Aunt leave the room.

The day passed slowly,—Frank went with his mother to the second service,—and she then proposed he should go and inquire how Jessie Havendon was; whether the news of the murder had alarmed her. She was sometime before she could persuade him, but she succeeded at last, promising him he should find tea waiting for him on his return.

Annie and her Aunt sat reading for some time, and then the light began to fade, and they closed their books and drew near the fire.

“Auntie, dear,” said Annie in that sweet sad voice she had spoken in all the day, “I think I have found out something which used to puzzle me,—how you have borne all your troubles; you have found the way here,” she said, laying her hand on the Bible in her lap, “this has taught you all the calmness and endurance which has often set me wondering, and you must have studied it when you were quite young,—young as I am,—till you had stored in your heart a lesson for every fault, a promise for every good, and a consolation for every sorrow; I thought, so

foolishly, sinfully I am afraid, dear Auntie,—that this book and all serious thoughts and readings were for old people, but now I know that there is hope and comfort in it for all, and that if it is not studied in youth, it will not help us in age.”

Astonished at this change in the light-hearted, thoughtless, childish Annie, Mrs. Lindsay scarcely knew how to answer. Before she had time to reply, however, Annie slipped from her chair, and kneeling down by her Aunt with her head on her shoulder, said :

“ Amongst all your troubles you never told me whether,—whether,—you were so unfortunate, so silly, as to love any one,—who didn’t,—who loved some one else ? ”

Mrs. Lindsay gave the slightest possible start, and then said, as she laid her hand on the golden hair of her niece,

“ No, my child, I was spared that ; but a case of the kind occurred in my own family ; a sweet young girl, joyous and merry-hearted, had been brought up by a relation, and was constantly and unavoidably thrown into contact with this lady’s

son ; no one could know the girl without loving her, but the young man loved her as his darling little cousin only. She one day discovered his affection for another,—her eyes were opened, she was his cousin, nothing more,—she had no other home—she must learn to bear this her first trial bravely, like a woman, like a Christian ; so, Annie, she buried the secret in her heart, told no one, not even her fond old Aunt, but rejoiced in this her first sorrow, because it taught her the truth and value of those beautiful words ; “Before I was troubled I went wrong, but now have I kept thy law.”

Annie made no answer, but clung close to her Aunt, and sobbed as though her little heart were breaking ; that night when she fervently kissed her dear nurse, she said, smiling through her tears,

“ Grace ! I have found the cloud—but I think I *do* see the edge of the lining.”

Long after she was gone to bed, Frank sat up talking to his mother ; he told her that Jessie had been kind to him, kinder than usual, but that

every gentle look and word had gone to his heart, for he felt how ill he deserved them, "besides the one obstacle which has always seemed to be between us, her wealth and my poverty, there is now a greater, Mother ; I am not worthy of her ; your teaching, your example had made me something near to her in goodness, until last night the demon of evil entered me, and can I clasp to the heart that has even harbored a guilty thought, a being of such goodness and purity ;"—his hand was in his mother's as he spoke, she pressed it fondly, and turning on him her soft blue eyes said :

" My boy, in a life of almost unceasing sorrow, in which I can scarce number twelve happy months, nothing has ever given me greater grief than the knowledge that my darling child could have permitted passion to have such power over him ; and a sinking cold sensation comes over me when I consider what you might have done ; but you must remember you are as much overrating Jessie's goodness as your own sinfulness. I believe her to be a very good girl, she has had an excel-

lent mother, and has profited by her excellent teaching, but, Frank, she is human, and has faults which if roused by temptation might become sins grievous as yours, though of a different nature.

“A dear old friend of mine used, with the truest Christian charity, to say, when he heard any one being loudly condemned for some fault,— ‘Ah! well, yes, it seems very bad to me, because that’s not my way of sinning.’ We are all sinners, Frank, dear, but some of us are more tried, more tempted,—we have none of us hope but in mercy. Remember this when you would judge too harshly; remember this when you would love too fondly;—there is no perfection in human nature. Passion had almost maddened you, and you might have revenged yourself on the man who had sinned against you, forgetting that there is One alone who will repay. He has, I hope and pray, my dear Frank, pardoned you, for he has promised it to those who repent; do not let this then add another obstacle or be a hindrance to your obtaining a good wife, whose love will

comfort you, whose good counsels will assist you when I am——”

“Dear Mother! Thank you for the comforting words you have spoken, but I am only a poor clerk,” he continued, smiling faintly, “and Jessie Havendon is an heiress; but we must to bed now, I have kept you up already too late.”



THE LINING.

TIME passed on, but with it Frank's depression increased rather than diminished. He began to look ill, and his mother grew sadly anxious about him. Where the corn had waved so gracefully in the breeze, there was rough stubble now, the trees were leafless, the hedges bare; in place of the green foliage was now the hoar frost; the cattle were taken into their warm sheds, and all spoke of Winter,—of Christmas time, which some were looking forward to with so much joy, others with as great a dread.

There is now a new and very constant visitor beneath Mrs. Lindsay's cottage roof, a young pale man, remarkable only for a look of the greatest benevolence. He has been some two

months a resident in Sidemoor, — actually in Sidemoor ; with peaceful lovely Allerton so near, he chose a home in Sidemoor. He had heard of its awful condition, and possessing a little property beside what he earned as a doctor, he took one of the long-deserted houses, and began his seemingly hopeless but benevolent scheme of reforming the wretched inhabitants. He became acquainted with the Lindsays, and there found his recreation after the labors of the day ; — to them he would recount all he had done, — all he hoped to do.

They were ready listeners, especially Annie, she would sit beside him, her blue eyes fixed on his pale intellectual face, and eagerly drink in all he told her, of how at first they had insulted and jeered at him, of how his curing a woman of a dreadful illness had turned the tide in his favor, and that now he could not only pass through the street unmolested, but they seemed to respect him ; of once when he had been sitting by a woman's bedside, a boy had tried to pick his pocket, but the father had pushed him angrily away, and bid him remember it was “ the good

doctor"—of the long conversations he had had with the Vicar, who had come into his views very readily, and how together they hoped to finish the good work.

On the ensuing Monday the school was to be re-opened, four mothers had promised him their children should go, and he hoped before that day to get many more.

Poor Annie, whose childish mirthfulness had never returned, and who had until now manifested a gentle apathy,—seemed roused into activity again, by the young doctor's recitals, and was never weary of listening to him. On the Monday evening that the school opened, he was with the Lindsays again, for Annie had begged he would come and tell them about it. He was in great spirits, six children had been and behaved tolerably well, and the Vicar was going to have a Curate,—and the little Church was to be opened in the morning as well as in the afternoon. He was full of hope and excitement; his plain pale face was tinged with color, and Annie began to wonder how she could ever have thought him ugly.

He was so clever, at least he seemed so to Annie, that she was always afraid to talk to him much, and for many evenings she had been summoning courage to say something to him; she had felt, as he spoke so warmly and energetically of all he meant to do for these wretched people, and as she watched the brightness which kindled in his face, that he must have found the true purpose and aim of life; that he was fulfilling the command to "love one another" in its highest sense, for he was loving them in deed as well as word, loving those whom it was hard to love,—not because they loved him, and it was pleasant to him to serve them,—but from that best and highest motive,—because he felt they had souls to be saved, and that they must not be lost for want of a hand stretched out to help them; and as she reflected on all this, she thought how happy he must be, to be thus doing his duty,—how few things could have power to make him wretched, thus well employed,—how little time he must have to brood over disappointments and sorrows, and as she drew near to him, and, raising her

eyes to his face, said so softly that he only could catch the words :

“ May I help you ; I don’t know that I could be of much use, but I think I could teach in the school.”

What a delighted face he turned on her as she spoke, and how earnestly he said,

“ Thank you a thousand times, but can you venture among such people, though,” he continued hastily as if fearful of frightening her from her good purpose, “ I shall always be there to take care of you.”

“ To take care of you ! ” simple words, but to him as he uttered them, and to Annie as she heard them, they sounded strangely, and a bright blush mounted to her temples. There was an awkward pause, and soon after he rose and said he must go, shook hands twice with Frank and then apologized, and said he did not mean it, and then laughed, and wished Mrs. Lindsay “ good morning,” and so left the house very awkwardly.

Mrs. Lindsay said he was so excited about his plans he did not know what he was doing. Frank

said nothing; he was too much absorbed in his own feelings to notice anything,—and Annie said, “she could not eat any supper,” and went to bed.

But it was not much use Annie’s going to bed as far as sleep went, for her little head was full of schemes,—such romantic notions filled her brain, such improbable ideas,—but she went to sleep finally, fully determined to put in practice two of her plans; one was to teach in the schools, and the other was a secret!

She was up very early in the morning, a sharp cold morning it was too, enough to freeze up the very best resolutions of doing anything but sitting knees and nose in the fire; but Annie was a heroine, and so her resolutions kept as firm in that blank cold frosty morning, as when they were formed in her own warm bed the night before. The moment after breakfast, she said,

“Auntie, dear, I am going for a walk, can I do anything for you in the village?”

“Auntie” looked up at her wonderingly;—almost the old bright voice again. “No, dear,

nothing, thank you," she answered, "is Grace going with you?"

"No, Auntie, I am going by myself, good bye!" and, seemingly afraid to be stopped for another moment, she started off.

Over the common, the bleak common, Annie trotted briskly,—the keen wind blew in her face, but she only drew her cloak closer round her and walked faster; it did not blow away a sweet smile that was resting on her lips;—the dimples had had a long holiday, but they had all come back to work to-day. On she hurried,—no time but for a blithe good morning to the friends she met, no time to stop and kiss the children even, though as she passes the cottages they run out and call after her; along the high road, over a bridge, down a long lane, and then she stops before James Havendon's pretty cottage, she pauses as though to take breath after such a sharp walk, and then pulls the gate-bell. All the dogs begin to bark, they do not know what a good little girl is at the gate, or they would not make such an angry noise. Mr. Havendon, for whom she asks,

is at home, and so she goes in. No, no, curious reader, you are not going in, too, you must wait till she comes out again, though it is cold outside.

She is a long time, but at last she comes, with such a flushed face, but still the dimples; and, at the same rapid pace, she retraces her steps, but not all the way home. At the bridge she makes a turn and goes towards Sidemoor; as she reaches the entrance of the village, she slackens her pace as though afraid to enter it alone,—not alone, Annie,—a voice behind her startles her, and looking round she sees the young doctor.

“Miss Lindsay, are you really going to the school? This is very kind.”

It is not chronicled what answer Annie made; if called upon herself to say, she would not know, but she put her arm through his when he offered it to her, and walked on to the school. And day after day from that morning was Annie found diligently at her task,—patiently, cheerfully teaching those dense, dogged children, seeming to make little impression on them, nothing to encourage her in their progress, but as she raises

her eyes from the book, the contents of which she is so earnestly endeavoring to impress on the minds of her pupils, she sees a pale face and dark eyes fixed earnestly upon her, looking approvingly and encouragingly at her. And she is proud and satisfied, the roses come back to her cheeks, the smile to her lips, the bright joyous tones to her voice, and with all her old playfulness she endeavors to cheer Frank, to draw him from his moody silence ; and again her ringing laugh gladdens the heart of her old Nurse, and of her Aunt, who wonders at the change, but calls her a “ brave little girl.”

It is Christmas Eve, every one in the village is busy and excited. For the first time in Sidemoor for many years, Christmas is thought of and kept ; in the little window-panes pieces of holly and laurel are placed, and mothers are actually working to make their children neat for Christmas Day ; —those who have come regularly to school are to have new dresses given them, —new dresses ! to those who in their little lives could only remember to have worn dirty rags, —they are

looking forward with a strange interest to to-morrow.

Annie had been very busy and excited all the morning, busy in her own room,—her Aunt had scarcely seen anything of her. When she was quite sure Frank was gone out, and that her Aunt was alone, she came down stairs with a strange new sort of expression on her face, and entered the parlor. Her Aunt was reading; she came close to her and laid her hand upon her shoulder. Mrs. Lindsay looked up:

“Well, my love,” she said, “what is it?”

Annie looked at her and smiled, and then grew very red, and said:

“Auntie, are you tired of me?”

“Tired of you, my child! what a question! Why?”

“Because, because, Auntie, I am going away.”

Her Aunt looked startled and distressed,—in a moment Annie’s arms were round her.

“Dear, dear Auntie, not far away, how could I? from you, my dearest, best friend, my Mother,—close to you I shall be always, for ever I hope,

but with," she added, in a lower voice, "Ernest to take care of me, and love me, for, Auntie, he wants me to be his little wife."

For a moment Mrs. Lindsay made no reply, so completely was she astounded by this intelligence, and with the inconsistency of human nature, she was disappointed that Annie had ceased, could cease, to love her son;—but it was a momentary feeling, the higher, better part of her nature triumphed, and she kissed fondly the burning cheek of her little niece, and said heartily:

"I am delighted to hear it, my darling child, and I hope, I am sure, you will be very happy."

With tears in her eyes, but still smiling brightly, Annie said:

"Auntie, dear, I did try to bear my trial bravely like a woman,—like a Christian,—and I have learnt to rejoice in it, because it has taught me the true value of those beautiful words, 'Before I was troubled I went wrong, but now have I kept thy law.'"

"True, true, my dear girl, go on through life as you have begun, struggling against a weak

indulgence of unavailing regrets, always bearing in mind that we were not placed here to be made happy, but to learn to deserve to be, and that the surest way to forget our own troubles is to do as you have done, strive to lighten those of others. I suppose Mr. Ernest Carrington will dine with us to-morrow.

“Yes, please, Auntie.”

Auntie sighed as she said,

“I wish both my children were equally happy.”

“Patience, Auntie,” answered Annie, and again kissing her she flew off to communicate her tidings to one who would be equally glad to hear them,—her fond and faithful nurse.

James Havendon had ordered that all employed in his service should leave business early, and, therefore, as soon as it was dusk Frank prepared to go home; not joyfully as the others,—he would just as soon have remained in the counting house,—for he was working for Jessie’s father. Since the night of Butler’s murder, Frank had been an altered man; before that he had been full of hopes, of plans for the future, all connected

with a vague idea of Jessie's sharing that future ; from that moment such dreams had vanished, although he loved her even more deeply ; but he had made a stern resolution that never, while there was the slightest chance of his temper becoming uncontrollable, would he seek to make that gentle girl his wife ; since then, since that evening, his whole thoughts and energies had been concentrated on this one point, this one hope, to render himself worthy of being loved by Jessie Havendon ; before, he had only thought to make himself rich enough. He was just leaving the house, when he was told Mr. Havendon wished to speak to him. Of course he obeyed the summons and presented himself before him.

“ Mr. Lindsay,” he began, “ take a chair. I'm a man of few words, and I like to go to the point without circumlocution. A little bird, as the saying goes, has told me something about you, that I should like to hear the truth of.”

Frank shuddered, for the thought which always possessed him rose to his mind now, that Havendon was alluding to Butler ; for, although New-

ington was convicted of the murder, still that "conscience which makes cowards of us all," kept him in continual dread that some one might have seen him standing by the body on that fatal night.

As he seemed waiting for an answer, Frank replied, "You shall hear nothing else from me, sir."

"That I'm sure of, lad, that I'm sure of, particularly as I am not going exactly to accuse you of a crime."

Frank grew paler and paler, it was too evident, at least so he thought, to what he alluded.

"It's quite excusable in a young fellow like you," he continued; "I'm not going to be hard on you, so speak out bravely;" there was a merry chuckle in the old man's voice, and a roguish twinkle in his eye, which Frank thought strange, in connection with such a subject. Some weeks ago it would have irritated him, but his self-discipline had not been in vain, and he remained quite calm.

"The fact is, Mr. Lindsay, to make a long story short, I understand you love my daughter."

The room seemed to turn round with him, as the old man uttered these words, so completely was he unprepared for such a speech, but he made an effort to recover himself, and answered,

“I cannot guess, sir, how you have become possessed of the knowledge of this fact, for I do not deny that it is one, but situated as I am I never have, never should dare to have made either you or your daughter acquainted with such a hopeless passion; it has never passed my lips, but to my mother, and how it has reached your ears” —

“Ha! ha! I never tell secrets, but all these delicate affairs are not for a rough old fellow like me; I only wanted to know the truth, and I have asked a lady relation of mine to come and talk this over seriously with you, so you wait here a bit, and I’ll send her to you;” and rising quickly, Havendon hurried out of the room, leaving Frank lost in thought, as to how he had learnt this, and whether he was displeased or otherwise.

His back was to the door, and he was so ab-

sorbed as not to hear it re-open ; the rustling of dress first roused him, and turning, he saw Jessie his darling Jessie, blushing and smiling before him. What did it all mean? He could not speak or move, but she advanced slowly to him and said in a low trembling voice, "My father said you wanted me."

"I! Miss Havendon, no—I—this is too cruel,"—and poor Frank covered his eyes with his hands, as though to shut out that sweet blushing face which he had so long worshipped silently. There was an instant's pause, and then he felt a soft hand laid on his, and heard with acute distinctness, although spoken very softly, "Frank, dear Frank,"—he waited for no more, all resolutions, everything vanished but his love, his devouring love, and the bewildering certainty that it was returned.

Reader, we have no right here;—we will imagine half an hour to have passed, and Frank is again in the presence of James Havendon, telling him of his long continued love for his daughter, and his fear of rejection from his poverty.

of "My lad," replied Havendon, "there's no
shame in that, she'll have enough for both of you.
I only ask for my child what I've found for her,
a brave and honest man to love and cherish her,
and may God bless you both."

Where are Frank's resolutions? They are
fading fast, for he is human. All stern resolve
is melting away in the light of Jessie's smile, in
the love which is shining in her eyes, and as he
holds her hands in his, a hope, which is almost a
prayer, rises in his heart, that association with
one so gentle and so good may make him at length
worthy of her.

Christmas morning has dawned, bright, clear
and cold, and cheerful hearts and merry faces are
assembled round Mrs. Lindsay's breakfast table;
she *does* see both her children happy; she has
been patient and she is rewarded. They are all,
of course including Ernest Carrington, to dine at
Mr. Havendon's, and wherever Christmas that
day was kept, true genuine happiness could not
have been greater than amongst that party.
After dinner Mr. Havendon requested permission

to give a toast, which having been accorded, he rose and proposed the health of a Little Bird, who in whispering to him a secret, had given him the gratification of making two people very happy; and he thought it only fair to wish it happy in return, with a snug nest and a kind mate.

The toast was drunk with looks of wonderment by all save Jessie and Annie, who seemed to be in the secret, and the curiosity of men will rank as high as women's when it is a fact on record, that Mr. Frank Lindsay never rested till he had coaxed the secret from Jessie, and learnt that Annie, his cousin, was the kind little bird, whose whisperings had secured him his bride.

Annie has owed a long debt of gratitude to her Aunt, her second mother, who, as she clasps her to her heart and kisses and blesses her for her goodness to her son, tells her she is more than repaid.

Yes, Mrs. Lindsay could appreciate what Annie had done, and yet not fully, for she did not know what it had cost her, thus to put an irrevocable barrier to her own happiness by securing

Frank's. She did not know how Annie had struggled with her own selfish feelings, and how the noble part of her love had triumphed, and she had determined to make him, at least, happy. No! no one knew all this, but He to whom the secrets of all hearts are known. But the knowledge that the example of Ernest Carrington, his goodness, his zeal, his energy, had first stimulated Annie to exertion, first induced her to strive against the indulgence of her own selfish feelings, and taught her that the safe way to secure her own happiness was to endeavor to secure that of others, made her love and respect him more deeply, and give her hand to him, with a clear honest glance of trust in her blue eyes, which told of perfect confidence in his power to make her also happy.

The early spring was fixed for the marriage, and it was agreed that the two girls should be married on the same day, for Mr. Havendon said, February was the right time for his Little Bird to have a mate, and by that name he never ceased to call her. The weeks flew swiftly past to the happy lovers, and the end of February saw two

fair young brides standing by the altar in the village Church of Allerton. Mr. Havendon had doubled Frank's salary, and given each bride a handsome wedding present, and it was a sight to see his rosy, happy, proud face, as he stood by his daughter's side and placed her hand in Frank Lindsay's ; such a contrast in its rude health to the pale delicate mother, who with equal but much calmer joy stood there beside him.

She had written, when she knew of Annie's engagement, to Mr. Lindsay, and again when the marriage day was fixed, but she had had no answer, save a few lines to say he had no objection, but that he had no time to come down ; and it was with something of pain that she gazed on pretty blushing Annie, neglected so entirely by her father at this momentous period of her life.

But Grace ! who shall paint Grace's joy as she dressed for her bridal the darling, whose first wailing cry she had heard, whose helpless years of infancy she had tended so fondly, whose ripening years she had watched so proudly.

" Well, dear," she said, as she fastened her

dress, "I'm christening your pretty gown with my tears, old fool that I am ; I can scarce see for them, I'd better wait, may be they'll spoil it."

"No, no, Grace, dear," answered Annie, "they won't spoil it—you are determined I shall have some pearls on my wedding dress, that's all ; and such pearls," she continued, flinging her arms round her nurse's neck, "are far more precious to me, than any that money could buy me, dear, dear Grace."

The wedding is over, the solemn words are spoken, the crowd has dispersed, and the bridal party have returned home,—they have all agreed there should be no company, no expense at home, but that a dinner should be given to the poor of the two villages instead, so their own quiet breakfast is soon finished and the brides are gone.

For miles might the shouts be heard which rent the air as the carriages passed, the sonorous tone of youth, the trembling tone of age, and the shrill notes of childish voices, all mingled in that heartfelt cheer ; and lingered long in the memory of those whom it sent on their way rejoicing.

Having married my Hero and Heroine, and given a fair promise that they shall be happy ever after, what more have I to add? But little ;—simply to assure you that in their happiness Ernest and Annie did not forget their task, but continued, with unabated zeal, the work of reformation in Sidemoor. I will not tell you that a few months sufficed to make it a Paradise on earth, because that would make this a Fairy tale, which it has never pretended to be ; the task was a long one, to render the place even respectable ; but it was quite enough to cheer them in their labor, to see one or two cottages clean and decent, and know their inhabitants had changed their dissolute life for one at least of industry ; quite enough to see a few children come regularly to school, a few families regularly to Church, and so they still went on working and waiting ; and this is the one lesson we have to learn here, to labor and to wait, to work diligently, untiringly in the vineyard, and prove ourselves “ worthy of our hire.”


There may not be a Sidemoor near us, but

there is work for us to do fitted to our powers, if we would but seek for it; it may be very humble, very slight to what others may be called on to do, but if we do it diligently, our pay will be the same as theirs.

The lesson which had made so deep an impression on Frank he never forgot; the ghastly figure in that pale moonlight was ever present to him when his temper was about to rise, and it calmed him in a moment. This with the example of his pure and inestimable wife, made him at length as he had hoped and prayed, worthy of her; and witnessing the goodness and prosperity of those she loved best on earth, Mrs. Lindsay was truly happy, and it was no slight thing for them to feel that they had thus gladdened the evening of one, who had indeed borne the "burden and heat of the day."

Annie now fully understood the meaning and force of Grace's proverb; one we should all do well to study and believe. On all of us at some moment of our lives there has rested and there will rest it may be again, a heavy Cloud, but

gazing on it with the eyes of faith and trust, shall see through its darkness only the Silver Lining. Trials are but blessings in disguise. Each cloud which shadows our life comes charged with some good; if we would only look at it without shrinking, calmly and steadily, we should pierce its darkness, and see the light behind, should recognize some warning or acknowledge some chastening which makes us more the child of our Father, and speaks to us of His love. It may be that in a gay and prosperous life here we are forgetting another; so dazzled are our eyes by this world's brightness, we need the shadowing of the Cloud to speak to us of that other light. It is the Cloud that is leading us through the wilderness of life to the Land of Promise; how then can we fail to acknowledge its use, or be so blind that we cannot see its light. Pursuing our journey with patience, running the cheerful race that is set before us, we shall find that out of evil cometh good, and that the eye of Faith sees through all Clouds their Silver Lining.



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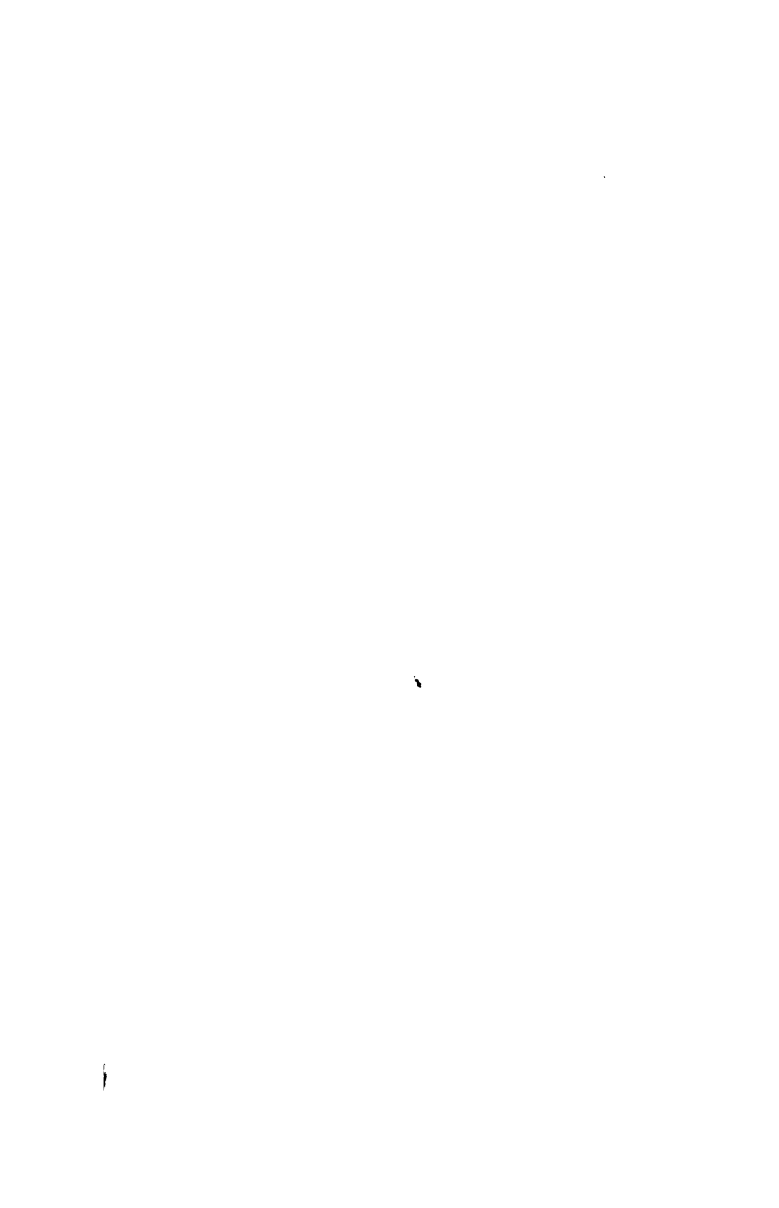
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the 1990s, the number of people with a diagnosis of schizophrenia has increased by 20% (Meltzer 1997).

There is a growing awareness of the need to improve the lives of people with mental health problems. The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a number of initiatives to improve the lives of people with mental health problems, including the development of a 'Global Strategy for the Management of Mental Health' (WHO 1993).

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